

HARMONY FIRE DISTRICT

P.O. Box 360 – 194 Putnam Pike
Harmony, R.I. 02829

The regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was held at the Harmony Fire Station on Thursday, February 19, 2009.

Present: Chief Stuart Pearson; Moderator - Raymond Fogarty, Jr.;
Treasurer - Sandra Owens; Tax Collector - Kimberly Barber;
Clerk - Ann Dahlquist;
Board Members - Louise Michaels, James Richards & George Kain

Absent: Attorney - Fred Mason, Jr.; Board Member - Milton Huston

I. – Meeting Called to Order: 7:07 pm by Moderator Fogarty.

II. - Approval of the minutes from the January 15th meeting.

Moderator Fogarty asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the January 15th meeting. If not, he would like to call for a motion to accept them. George Kain abstained from the vote, due to his absence from the meeting.

Louise made a motion to accept the minutes. Jim seconded the motion. The motion carried.

III. - Treasurer's Report:

Sandy presented a partial report for the month of December. Kim and Sandy are working on get the reports up to date. Kim explained that the basis that the treasurer reports on is cash in – cash out system. With the transition of doing payroll in-house, especially with direct deposit and the payroll tax liability remittances, the periods are overlapping. Therefore there are reconciling items. Sandy stated that the partially completed reports for the month of December are accurately presenting the expenses to date however.

Jim made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Louise seconded it. The motion carried.

IV. - Tax Collector's Report:

Taxes receivable balance is \$118,917.75 as of today's date. Taxes collected in the month of January were \$9,281.30. Third party billing monies collected in the month of January totaled \$5,758.78.

The Audit has been completed by Geoff Malo. Kim had given a copy to Sandy and the Chief previously and there is a copy in everyone's folder tonight. The auditor's report will be reviewed by the board members and discussed and voted on at next month's meeting.

There was a question asked at the last meeting by Sandy regarding the insurance expenses. Kim looked into it and found that the expense was posted to the wrong account. It will be reclassified.

Also at last month's meeting Ray had asked Kim to prepare a simple tax revenue analysis, comparing the first six months of last fiscal year to the current one. The revenue for 2007 was \$371,236.03 and the revenue for 2008 was \$381,551.13. These figures are a little deceiving however, because the tax bills did go out in June of 2007 and some revenue was posted prior to July 1st, the start of the fiscal year. Kim offered the reports for board members to review.

Sandy asked Kim if she had been receiving a lot more bankruptcy notices. Kim stated that no, what she has seen a lot of is banks/lenders taking over properties, foreclosing. Louise asked if the banks pay the taxes due. Kim said yes.

George brought up the topic of President Obama's stimulus package and how it might benefit the district, perhaps in regards to the building loan. Some discussion followed. Ray will make some inquiries regarding the building loan. Sandy asked Kim to e-mail her a copy of the building loan and the new contact information for USDA Rural Development. Our old contact, David Steere, retired in December.

Congratulations to Louise who is now a first time Grandma. Her daughter Jennifer gave birth to a healthy baby boy, Jason Michael, last week.

George made a motion to accept the tax collector's report. Louise seconded it. The motion carried.

V. - Chief's Report:

There have been 76 runs from January 1st until February 19th. The crew has been quite busy.

An Officer's meetings has been held to go over the departments "Standard Operating Procedures" (SOP's) and "Standard Operating Guidelines" (SOG's).

Last Sunday the crew participated in an Ice Rescue Drill on Waterman Lake.

An NFPA grant was submitted with West Glocester Fire Department for 2 AED's. Should we get this grant the cost to HFD will be 100% or \$250.00. The intent is to have an AED on every piece of fire fighting apparatus.

4 crew members are currently enrolled in a 12 week Firefighter I class being held at the South Foster Fire Department. Andrew Gaiewski, Ryan McAndrews, Charlie Vota and Johnathan Detri.

Recently the Chief attended the New England Association of Fire Chiefs (NEAFC) quarterly meeting in Springfield, MA.

On 2/8 a new probationary member class was started by the Deputy Chief. He has about 6 prospective members enrolled. The class is held every Sunday night from 6:30 – 9:00 pm.

The Chief attended a Firefighters Grant Application Workshop in Providence sponsored by Senator Reed, Congressman Langevin, and others. The Fire Act Grants will be due by September.

Ray asked the Chief to get in touch with his contact at Senator Jack Reed's office, Chris Albert, to ask for information about funding for fire districts in the stimulus package. There is some

conflicting information as to what we may be eligible for.

We have also completed a grant to RIEMS for EMS-C Pediatric Equipment.

On 2/10, in conjunction with the State Fire Marshal's office, the Chief participated in an on-site inspection at the Ponaganset High School.

The Chief and Kim looked into the paperwork on E-Rate and the RIEDC Renewable Energy Fund that Ray presented at the last meeting. They found that neither program applied to fire districts and forwarded the information to the Gloucester Town Planner.

The IAFC-VCOS Winter Newsletter was mailed today. It has the article written by John Visich about our Strategic Plan. We will have copies available for the board at the next meeting.

Also, the article written by Kim about George Kain receiving the RISFL Fire Fighter of the Year Award was published in the 1st Responder print edition. There is a copy available for board members to see.

Thank you cards were received from Mrs. Steere, for assistance we provided to her husband Russell, and from Patty Svansson, Chepachet Tax Collector, for the arrangement sent on behalf of the district on the passing of her father.

We have also purchased a new solid Oak Curio Cabinet. It was found on Craig's list, brand new, for the bargain price of \$500.00.

Everyone has probably noticed that all of the wall photos have been taken down. We are purchasing the frames and mats and they are being custom assembled courtesy of Michael's at Smithfield Crossing. We should have them back before the next board meeting.

Louise made a motion to accept the chief's report. George seconded it. The motion carried.

VI. - Committee Reports:

- a. Building Committee – Milton, Chair – this project has been completed and can be removed from the agenda.
- b. Rescue Committee – Jim, Chair – A couple committee meetings have been held and "Requests for Proposals" (RFP's) were sent out to 3 companies. Osage, Specialty Vehicles and Pierce. Only 2 responses were received. Both proposals quoted Ford F450 chassis and the prices were between \$160,000 and 180,000 complete. These figures do not include a possible trade-in value and the idea has also been discussed to hold on to the current rescue as a spare. We currently have approximately \$113,000 +30,000 in the 2009/2010 budget totals \$143,000. The next step will be to look at the individual specifications we would require for the new rescue. Some discussion followed about whether to call a special meeting now to vote on the purchase or to have it voted on at the district's annual meeting in June. It was decided to wait until June.
- c. Tax Exemption Committee – George, Chair – The committee met to discuss tax exemptions in general. Viviane presented information on the law and history of exemptions, as well as the town of Gloucester's rules and regulations regarding

exemptions. Being the Gloucester Tax Assessor having compiled a Tax Assessor's Handbook, has made her an invaluable asset to this committee. The committee does not feel that there is any reason to vary from the way the town figures their exemptions. They gather all documents and approve resident's applications for exemptions available. They also follow up on these people year to year to be sure they still qualify and make adjustments for income changes. Essentially all of the work is done in the town assessor's office and just passed on to the fire district. Ray asked that the committee have something in writing regarding district tax exemptions ready to present at the next meeting. A motion can then be made and voted on. Ray also asked that a letter be sent to resident Russell Gross, informing him that we will be voting on the tax exemption issue at our next meeting.

VII. - Old Business: 'Call Pay' analysis being prepared by George. He has general guidelines prepared and he now needs to look into assigning dollar amounts. He should have the analysis complete for the next meeting. Ray stated that the program would need to be finalized by the April meeting in order to appropriate funding in the upcoming year's budget.

Louise asked about the review of budgeted funds in the heat and fuel accounts. Ray asked that we send a thank you note to Reichert Oil for adjusting the rate we pay, even though we had been locked in. George made the motion. Louise seconded it. The motion passed.

VIII. - New Business: Jim thanked the board for the arrangement sent to his family upon the passing of his father-in-law. It was appreciated.

Kim mentioned that the annual banquet will be held on May 2nd at Thompson Speedway again.

IX. - Public Input: No audience.

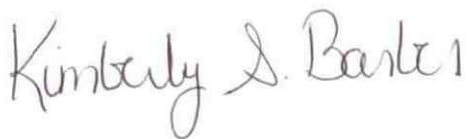
X. - Executive Session: the session advertised has been postponed until next month's meeting.

XI. - Adjournment:

Jim made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Louise seconded it. The motion carried. The February meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

The next meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board is scheduled for Thursday, 7:00 pm, March 19, 2009 at the Harmony Fire Department.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kimberly S. Barber".

Kimberly S. Barber
Tax Collector/Secretary